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## NATURE'S MIMICRIES.

THERE is likeness or imitation in almost everything we see. The roses on the wall shape themselves into Turks' heads and bushy-whiskered Moors; the flowers on the chintz curtains fold themselves into children without arms, and old men without legs; chairs are twisted into the similitude of frantic acrobats performing impossible feats; and sideboards stand like sturdy Dutchmen, square and solid, or mince like gallants of the time of Louis Quinze, all bows and ruffles, tags, point, and embroidery. Even Nature herself follows suit, and recasts a happy idea in many moulds. A favourite trick of hers is to make some men with faces like cats, some like horses, a great many like camels (I saw at the *Conversationshaus* at Baden four elderly ladies of the Baden aristocracy, sitting in a row, and every one of them was a camel from brow to bust), an infinitude like birds, while every variety of dog has its type, and what the French call 'false seeming,' in the first large assembly you enter. Crows, eagles, sparrows, ridiculous snipes, and voracious kites; robins, pugnacious, self-assertive, and genial; pies, inquisitive and variable; parrots, hook-beaked, noisy, oriental—have I not seen them all scattered about among my dear friends, with cats, cows, and horses intervening? Monkeys are even nearer and more numerous. But here the likeness is two-sided—the monkey imitates the man, and the man is often only the enlarged copy of the monkey.

Ages and ages ago, the *Simia Polycomos*, the king-monkey, with his magnificent *chélure*, prefigured in the primeval forests the European fashion of the full-bottomed wigs. Before ever a peruke-maker dreamed of canons or queues, of pig-tails, full-bottoms, or rolls, the *Simia Polycomos* shook out his flowing locks in the sun, and let the warm forest-airs dress them according to the fashion. The pretty little marmoset, too, carried ruffs at the side of its head long before our great ladies wore broad flapping frills to their caps; and carries them to this day, when our fickle fashions have dressed the heads of our human marmosets in quite a different manner. The *Pithecia Satanas* has a well-developed beard, and his hair falls naturally apart over his forehead like a man's; many wear long gloves or mittens such as our grandmothers wore in their prime; the *Ateles* or Spider monkeys do everything that belongs to their name but spin cobwebs and live in cells; the comical-looking *Kahau* (*Simia nasalis*) shews his long nose, dwarfed chin, and sunken brow regularly twice a year in my house when he comes to collect a certain tax; and many an old negro, timid, gentle, and

beseaching, might pass for the bigger brother of the soft-mannered *Pithecia melanocephala*.

Other things also imitate man, both in look and action. The sloth bear is like a wild eccentric artist about his head, round which the fur flows in such rich luxuriance; the spectacled bear looks much as if he had been to a prize-fight and got his eyes blackened by the 'Champion'; the cobra has spectacles as distinctly marked as those on your respectable nose, O my venerable friend! and the capuchin bald-head (*Corocina gymnocephala*) is for all the world like a dear old priest or poet; unless, indeed, the censorious could see in him a nearer resemblance to the Father of the Marshalsea, or to that inimitable old humbug, the owner of the rents of Bleeding Heart Yard. By the by, there is another coracina (*C. cephaloptera*, or winged-head), who has a splendid head, with two very notable human imitations growing thereon. The fringed flying lizard has petticoats and lappets; and the argus has a cluster of feathers hanging from his head wonderfully like coloured lace and jewels; while very many of the foreign peacock and pheasant tribes have ruffs and head-dresses, exactly like what court-milliners would make for court-ladies. The tailor-bird first weaves his own cotton thread, then sews up his nest; while the *ploceinoe*, the sociable birds—such as the republican and sociable weavers—build bird-towns, not quite like the bird-town of Aristophanes though, and live in a happy state of harmony and communism. The secretary bird has a wild fall of feathers from his brow, which give him a very aesthetic look; the Pie de Paradis is in full court-costume, resplendent with burning jewels, and brave with ruffs and trains; the condor wears a lady's boa—what nurses call 'pussies' when they speak to little children; and the *Chlamydosaurus Kingii*, a lizard, has a hood and a plaited frill, very elegant and very strange. All the lizard tribe are more or less uncanny. The siredons have queer fringed gills that give them quite a ball-room look; especially the axolotl, one of the queerest of them all; and all the tribe, but especially their first-cousin, the *Proteus anguinus*, have odd little childish hands and arms, that look as if they had been made as first experiments, to be followed up by the perfection of the human idea. Like first experiments also are those odd bowing figures, those extraordinary, sketchy, human forms, who toss and bow and wave and plunge about the mouth of the tube of the *sabella*, with arms and head and shoulders all complete, but fastened to the ground by their two legs run into one.

But Nature does not stop at human imitations; she incessantly repeats herself through all her creations, and takes one model in succession for various

purposes. She makes a land-creature with short ridiculous fore-arms, forced to hold itself upright, and to carry feckless-looking *pattes* dangling before it; and she makes the same kind of thing on the water, only a trifle more absurd, and infinitely more ungraceful. The kangaroo and the penguin are virtually cast in the same mould, modified only according to their element. She puts horns into some of her four-footed creatures, and, not to let her feathered children be behind-hand, she runs one right from the brain of the horned screamer, the *palamedea*, while she sticks up mock ones, made out of gristle and feathers only, on the heads of the horned owl, the harpy eagle, and some others. Almost every species of birds has a crested member among them, as a diversion from the original type, and to knit them all up into a chain of mutual likeness; and she ties ruffs round their necks, and tags trains to their tails, and on some she fastens spurs, and on others she stitches frills, and sends them forth into the woods glittering with organic gold and jewels. She makes them all, one after the other, foretell the future things of men. Long before the first Greek strung his lyre on the tortoise-shell lying on the sea-shore, she shaped one out of the tail of the gorgeous *Menura*, the kingly Bird of Paradise of the antipodes; and when Welsh bards were unknown, and the harp of Erin lying mute in the dusk of the future, she stamped a harp on the back of the seal, and laughed to think of the time when man's wit would discover its music. Before the Indians hollowed out their birch-bark canoes, she made a boat of the bill of the *Cancromia cochlearia*, the boat-bill *par excellence*, also one of the venerable looking sleek monkish birds, with his feathers flowing laxly from his brows; and, or ever the sons of Adam fashioned themselves spoons for their cock-a-leekie, the *platalea*, or spoonbill, had shewn them the best shape possible for the purpose. She dabbed a little red wax on to the wing of the *Bombycilla*, or waxwing, before Hyde arose or the virtues of shell-lac and carmine were discovered; and she tasselled the ears of the booted lynx and the carcal centuries before the college-lads stuck tabs to their trencher-boards. Not content with these prophetic capers, she puts wings to a reptile, and makes of the *Dactyloptera*, or flying gurnard, one of the abnormal creatures she delights in; the *Blennius ocellaris* she deludes into fancying itself a sea-butterfly, making a clumsy kind of beast with scaly spots for peacock's eyes, and slimy fins for the downy wings of *Io Vanessa*, so lately feeding upon nettles in the garden; in the *Plataea vespertilio* she tries her hand at a fish-bat, and in the spider-crabs she messes up arachnidae and crustacea together.

Much more does she do in her workshop of the great unfathomable, fertile sea. Full of strange things has she made it—things that seem to be the first blotted, ungainly efforts of her early youth, before she had learned to use her hands deftly, or had developed by education and experience the whole facility of her plastic power. The *blennius* was such a blurred outline of the future graceful butterfly; and in the *cheironedes*, that queer-looking scaly barrel met with out a-walking over the rocks in tropical sea-places, are rudely symbolised feet and legs—about as perfectly as a child would have symbolised them, in those four-square scratches set to the edge of the doll's petticoat on his slate. In the hippocampus is the distorted image of the future race-horse head; in the eel is the idea of the snake; in the torpedo we have the power which took Galvani and Volta so many years to perfect; and in the sea-mouse, one of the *annelidae*, we have a fanciful and faint, but not wholly imaginary, resemblance to the little brown earth-mouse that nibbles at our cheese by night, and scampers noisily through

the rubble of the walls by day. Among the seals or *Phocidae*, we get many first ideas, many early conceptions and rude experiments in the great laboratory of the universe, but all executed with the same indifferent success. The sea-lion, the sea-cow, the sea-calf, the sea-elephant, the sea-leopard, the sea-bear, have severally a certain resemblance to the more perfected animals of which they are the prototypes; but they are all sketchy and unfinished, mere first draughts done roughly in crayons, with very little made out, and nothing shaded off. Then the seals must needs imitate other things. One, whom I have already handled, carries the photograph of a harp on his back; another is marbled; and a third wears a crest somewhat like a soldier's helmet on his head; while all have come in, at various times, as the probable originals of the fascinating mermaid, who lives under the roots of the sea, and lures young men down to destruction with her songs and golden hair. And speaking of sketchy things, what in the world is the whole tribe of *sepiadae* like but the pictures done by savages and children of ghosts and bogies? Their staring eyes, long waving arms, deformed bodies, biting beaks, and mighty suckers make them weird and frightful enough. There is one, the *Onychoteuthis Banksii*, exactly like a New Zealand idol, with its uniformed imitation of a draped human figure with stays, and its head all eyes and waving feathers.

The very sea-weeds are imitative, and prefigure earthly and human things. Those broad green and purple fronds are more like ribbons than anything else, while the little tufted bunches of red and white and violet and yellow lie marvellously close to feathers, crusted over by the salt sea-wave. The sea-egg (*Echinus*) is another imitation; and when you go down to the polypi and the mollusks, not to speak of the microscopic creatures, you find the likeness of most things lying round you. The sea-fan waves its graceful leaf slowly in the stream; the wonderful little rod (*Virgularia mirabilis*) shews its ornate loveliness to any one who will stoop to find; and the masses of flower-bells, feathers, beaded chains and twisted braids, fringes, jewels, jacks-in-boxes, bird's heads, and the like, defy calculation. Look at the extraordinary forms assumed by the *acalephae* or sea-nettles—the jelly-fish with their fringed tentacles and what seem to be the roots and stem of the mushroom, fretted into the mouldings of the Corinthian column. They are always changing, even to themselves, and give but little promise when seen as only lumps of coloured jelly, of the marvellous beauty to which they can unfold. Some are covered with loose fringe that hangs down like the fringe from a lady's parasol; others have a mushroom top, with a stem all flounced and furbelowed; others, again, throw out long leafy tentacles, which hang pendant from the dome; and one is an umbrella, with the oddest of sticks and most unserviceable of handles. Many are delicately white, and lie on the sea like crowding flakes of half-melted snow; but when they spread themselves out into their fringed disks and ornate domes, they change to all imaginable colours, and glance in the sunlight like a handful of living jewels. Take the sea-flowers, too, the *actiniae*, and see what wonderful likenesses shape themselves out of those odd bits of flaccid flesh. Here is a daisy, with its white petals and golden heart; there a cucumber, a little prickly perhaps, and with a feathered head such as earthy cucumbers never wear, but no doubt of excellent flavour; here is a bed of mesembryanthemums of all hues, purple and blue, violet and pink, and yellow and green; and there a dianthus, with its broad white flower fringed and cut round the margin, just like the white pink growing in your sunny southern border. A mollusk, the *Bursatella Leachii*, is like a highly ornamented heart, with a pennatifid frond waving gracefully from the rent in the

side. Again, look at the madrepores and corals, with their flower-like shapes and flower-like hues; at the fossil encrinite or stone lily, so graceful when in life; at the zoophytes and infusoria, also so like to flowers in their strange revealings; and then turn to the shells, or rather to both shell and animal, and see what wonderful things we get out of them. One shell is like a helmet—Pallas Athene herself might have taken the model of her own from it; another is like a cup; a third is a shield; while the creatures underneath are like anything you please. There is the argonaut with its staring eyes and long lithe arms, now shooting through the water like an arrow, now crawling elfishly on its head at the bottom, now spreading out its sail-arms, now flourishing its row-arms, and always with the most graceful shell that Nature ever made, helping it to stand forth as one of the world's wonders of beauty—well, the argonaut is like any and everything. You may look at it till you see in it the type and emblem of almost every bit of natural work scattered through the world, while through every change peers out an elfish face with two huge staring eyes, that look at you with weird meaning, and seem to threaten you with wild unearthly horrors if you disturb its rest. There is the *Haliotis tuberculatus*, again, with its animal fringed and pinked and ruffled to perfection, and with its shell just like an ear—indeed, it is the sea-ear; and there is the *Isocardia*, or heart-shell; and the two *solens*—the razor-shell, and the knife-shell; while among the cowries we have a minute French roll, a harp and a spindle, a weaver's shuttle, a music shell, and a shell that is like a poached egg, a mole cowry and a vetch cowry, a small-pox cowry, a false spindle; and, last of all, a 'rough tear,' hardened into chalk and glaze. Then there is a woodcock's head (*Murex haustellum*), and a tulip shell (*Fasciolaria tulipa*), a marine-trumpet (*Triton variegatus*), with the oddest-looking animal inside; a top (*Trochus ziziphinus*), sea-eggs like grapes (the eggs of the cuttle-fish), while the beard or byssus of the muscle is like fine silk, and can be spun into gloves or purses; and the sabella inhabits a tube almost exactly like the case of the caddis-worm. The stickleback, the goramy, and the hasser, build nests like birds, only that they are open at both ends, and that the fish swim in and out at will; the cat-fish swims about in company with her young, like a proud hen with her chickens; and the sun-fish hovers for weeks over her young, protecting them against danger.

In stones, the agates claim a large share of natural likenesses. Ribbon, moss, landscapes, and blood spots, are all distinctly figured in the various specimens which popularly bear their names; while cornelian, which is also an agate, is the colour of flesh: whence indeed it takes its name. Opal gives us no bad imitation of cats' eyes—it's changing light not inaptly imaging the strange lustre of those of our favourite tabby purring loudly on our knee; and the deep blue sapphires are paler than were thine eyes, oh my Irish love! when joy and love lit them up with the fires which never dull or die. In the pudding-stone, we get no such very bad imitation of a coarse-grained pudding roughly spooned together; and in many of the white figures lying through the black and gray marbles, we may trace the forms of the half of animate and inanimate creation. I remember a black marble chimney-piece in the old vicarage where I was born, which used to be an endless book of pictures to us children. There was wealth abundant there: a cat's head, with a collar round the throat; a rabbit; a baby's face and a baby's cradle; a horse; a bird; sundry old men much battered and deformed; rings, purses, bags, and ruffles, swords and shoes, chairs, thrones, stools, and tables; in short, likenesses, more or less correct, of half the things about. Then there is a ruin marble—yellowish, with brown lines and shadings that represent old castles and towers

crumbling to decay: and an oolite marble, gray with speckled dots, like the roe of a fish suddenly petrified for ever; and the beautiful *Pietra stellaria*—a flower-like marble, studded all over with the discs of the madrepore; very lovely and very suggestive.

Among the insects, there is a firetail-fly that, cuckoo-like, lays its eggs in the nests of other insect-mothers; and there is a caterpillar that sets his defying arms a-kimbo, and bids the whole world look out for the consequences: he is the 'mask' of the soft, gray, modest, puss-moth; and there is a 'woolly bear,' more like a bit of Berlin wool roughly 'teased' than a bear; and a magpie-moth, but with gay ribbons fluttering through the orthodox black and white; and a caterpillar, just like a stick—one of the loopers—a little brown fellow, who fastens himself on to a tree or decaying branch, whence he swings stiffly, for all the world like a dead dry twig not yet detached. There are other stick-insects, not caterpillars, called *Phasmida* or spectres, of the orthoptera order, which are also just like sticks and dry twigs, with their wing-covers rounded so as to sit close to the side, and which thus do not betray the presence of organs scarcely natural to withered twigs. There are leaf-insects, too, Soothsayers, of the tribe of the *Mantida*, also orthoptera, and as precisely like leaves as the others were like twigs. They are of all varieties of tree-hues—from the pale yellow of the opening bud, to the rich green of the perfect, and the dusky brown of the withered leaf. 'These amazing insects,' as Sir Emerson Tennent calls them, can scarcely be distinguished from the trees and grass where they lie. Their wings are like ribbed and fibrous follicles, and every joint of their legs expands into broad plaita, like a half-opened leaflet. They rest on their abdomen, and drag themselves along by means of their legs, which lie so flat on the ground that no one can see them as the creature moves slowly along. The eggs, strange to say, are precisely like seeds—brown, pentangular, with stems, and punctured in all the intersections. An insect like a leaf laying eggs like seeds, may surely rank as one of the strangest of all the natural imitations in the world! There is also a tree-frog, the *hyda*, green and leaf-like, who hops about from bough to bough, and swings himself by his hind leg which does duty for a stalk, very much as a loose leaf might shake and swing in the evening air. The death's-head moth carries his *memento mori* printed on his back in the skull and cross-bones, which people make out from the markings; and the queer little *membracide* are horned and helmeted creatures that trot along as if dressed up for a masquerade. The diamond beetle (*Curculio splendidus*), and the gold beetle (*Buprestis*), are literally and without exaggeration living gems. The golden and brilliant wing-cases are taken to make those wonderful embroideries of the Indian zenana, while the lustrous joints of the legs are strung on threads for necklaces and bracelets. Some of the other metallic and gemlike beetles—the *Elateridae*, for instance (in which tribe we find the fireflies) and the *Lamellicorns*—are also used as women's ornaments; so that these insects may safely come under the head of natural imitations, seeing that they are as brilliant in sheen, of like hue, and used for the same purposes, as sapphires and rubies, emeralds and topazes. The tortoise-beetle, one of the *Cassidae*, is also very brilliant. 'It is like a ruby encased in pearl,' and is quite startling for its purity and depth of colouring; but it cannot be turned to any ornamental purposes, for all this glory goes when it dies, and leaves it only a dull brown husk, like a small tortoise in shape, with the outer case overlapping the body, and the legs drawn up under it. Another insect, the *Planaria geoplana*, is a curious creature, 'of a light-brown above, white underneath, very broad and thin, and has a peculiarly-shaped tail, half-moon shaped—in fact, like a grocer's cheese-knife.' There are carpenter-ants, who make corridors

and pillars, halls and chambers, in the living wood, and stain them afterwards elbon-black; and there are mason-wasps and carpenter-bees. The *oiketicus* makes a nest like the Roman fasces—it is called Lictor from the circumstance—binding round it stems of leaves, twigs, thorns, and sticks, which it fastens with threads till it looks like a bundle of rods tied together. There is a cicada, which is called the knife-grinder because it makes a noise just like a knife-grinder's wheel; and there is a mole-cricket with paws like a mole.

Among plants, the orchids claim most attention. There is a spider orchis and a bee orchis, an orchis like a fly, one like a man, another like a lizard, and two more like a butterfly and a frog. The Spirito Santo plant of Panama, *Peristeria elata*, shews the figure of a dove with outstretched wings descending gently to the lip, and the knotted fibres of the roots of *Neottia nidus-avis* make the dove a nest for its repose. There are others equally curious. One has a fleshy hood, *Precoccia colorans*; another is the very image of a swan, with arched neck and gently elevated wings—this is the *Cynoches ventricosus*; the *Calceolaria viride* opens a beautiful capote, with bows and strings complete, and just the thing for a well-grown fairy in a summer's evening; the *Gongora fulva* is a sober-coloured Cap of Maintenance, with peaked and pendant flaps behind—a kind of poetised and floral coal-heaver's cap, and the *Oncidium papilio* is in all things exactly like a butterfly crawling over the dark-green leaves. The snowdrop tree, the *Halesia*, gives us a rich gathering of snowdrops on its branches; and a *Lechthys*, the *Couroupita Guianensis*, has huge round masses like cannon-balls, as the fruit residuum of its large deep rose-coloured flowers. The root of the mandrake, *Mandragora atropa*, is like the figure of a headless man, walking rapidly on footless stumps; indeed, much more like a man than anything that the ancient Mexicans have graven on their monuments, or than what the North American Indians write upon the leaves of their birch-bark mystery-books. The columbine bears a dove within its purple petals, and the spider has a congener in the *Tradescantia* as well as among the orchids. Butter, bread, tallow, and milk have their respective trees in the *Bassia butyracea*, the *Artocarpus*, the *Stillingia sebifera*, the *Pentadema butyracea*, and the famous cow-tree, which has a century of names, and which is only a great nettle after all. The horseshoe vetch, *Hippocratea*, has, very unnecessarily, seeds in the shape of a smith's shoe; the horse-tail grass, *Hippuria*, is as much like a horse's tail as it is like grass; while the ribbon-grass is prettier and more becoming than half the ribbons turned out of the mills at Coventry. The ice-plant is a mesembryanthemum, covered with a hoar-frost which the sun does not melt nor the rains dissolve; and the *Daphne lagetta*, or lace bark-tree, has a thin inner membrane, which, when macerated in water, is found to be cut and perforated and meashed into something like enough to lace for Charles II. once to wear in a cravat, frill, and ruffles. The elephant has a post-footh in the radical leaves of the *elephantopus*; potatoes are sometimes shaped like kidneys, so are other things, notably a vetch, and some of the seeds of the *leguminosae*; there is a red lotus with a flower like a rose, a fruit like a wasp's nest, and seeds like olives; and a pitcher-plant, the *nepenthe*, which draws its own water from the well of the dewy night, and fastens down the lid to keep it sweet and untainted by the wandering Bedouins of the air. The *Ficus elastica* is called the snake-tree as well as the India-rubber tree, because its large thick roots start up out of the ground in all manner of convolutions and contortions, just like so many snakes twisting over the earth; while all the flowers of the papilionaceous plants are more or less like the first sketch of the butterfly, whose name

they bear. Looking down among the lichens, we find a cup and a trumpet, a letter lichen, a map, and a hair—a god's hair, Jupiter's beard; while 'the agarics and fungi, with mildew and mould,' shape themselves into mitres and nests, clubs, cups, and caps, cages and umbrellas, snake-like stems and one-legged creatures frilled and ruffled like the best. There is a fungus like the most exquisite cut lace; and many of the more edible kinds imitate 'things which they are not' in smell as well as in shape. They smell like nectaries and like cheese, like cucumbers, roast-meat, nuts, and cayenne-pepper; and, side by side with them, the hedge-wound wort smells of carrion, and the orris-root of violets. There is another carion plant which I remember reading of, a beautiful thing, gorgeous with scarlet colouring, and proud in its regal form, but of such disgusting odour that no one would care to take it from its tropical bed; and there are as many 'false smells' altogether, as there are 'false seemings' in nature. But these are not easily demonstrable in an article, for human nostrils have independent modes of action, and refuse to follow their neighbour's lead. What smells of violets to one is like garlic to another; the odours which some drink in as lovingly as Namouna drank in the flower-scents by which she lived, to others are nauseating and unwholesome; and so we go on, each in his own way, and sniff or smell, snarl or lick according to our nature, and the kind of heart and brain within us. And, by the by, to complete this rapid catalogue, the human heart carries within it the likeness of a tree, and the brain has the semblance of a frond, beautifully marked.

#### OUT OF TROUBLE.

THE pleasant sun has not shewn his face to us beclouded and befogged Londoners for some eight days past. We are living just now in a kind of vapour-bath—an atmosphere that one might compare to cold steam—which not only wraps us round, and gets into our stomachs as we walk the streets, but invades our houses, depositing a varnish of dew on the walls of hall and staircase, where the moisture runs down in streams. In addition to the cloudy mist, which is everywhere, there is a dark-brown marsh-fog rising up from the river, and doing its best to travel northward against the heavy wet vapours in possession. As I go down from my home in Islington (not 'merry' now, but lachrymose to the very chimney-tops) to my den in the city, I meet the fog coming up in the guise of a brown mud-wall, and almost as opaque: it is so well defined as to its limits, that I can, and do, poke my walking-stick into it before I enter it myself. When I am in it, I feel warmer but a trifle asthmaticky, and I smell the Isle of Dogs, with just a *soupon* of tar in a state of decomposition. As a thirty years' Babylonian, I don't care a straw for the fog—I prefer it, in fact, to the cold, damp, influenza-giving vapour—only, one would like to see a little plainer where one is going, and to have light or transparency enough to navigate the crossings, which are rather abundant. Hereabouts is the approach to Crib College, an institution exceedingly well known in London, and which is patronised quite as much as its founders desire by those unwilling students for whose benefit it was intended. At this distance, I ought to see, and but for the fog I should see, the vanes of the College mill revolving high above the lofty walls that shut in the College grounds, and whose continuous revolutions afford evidence to an interested public, that the pupils within are not idle, but sedulously climbing the ladder of knowledge.

I arrive in front of the College gates just as the

clock is about to strike nine, and I am reminded by the spectacle that awaits me there, that this being Monday morning, I am just in time to witness a partial break-up of the College pupils, who at this very nick of time are about leaving the arms of their dear *alma mater*; or, in other words—Crib College being Cold Bath Fields Prison—I happen to be present at one of those petty jail-deliveries which take place with undeviating regularity on this dreary-looking spot.

There are perhaps a hundred people waiting in the purlieus of the prison, all anxiously watching for some well-known face which has been absent for a longer or shorter period from the home-circle, or—leaving home out of the question—from the society of their friends, and which is destined to emerge from the prison-door within the next half hour. They are a motley and a melancholy band, who do not consort much with each other, save in small, scattered groups of twos and threes, and who for the most part seem rather to avoid recognition than to seek for sympathy. Many, indeed the most of them, are of the vagabond, almost beggarly class; and you may notice that of these the very lowest and most squalid are the boldest, the noisiest, and most demonstrative. They it is who, penetrating the enclosure, flock round the prison-doors, where they beguile the time with equivocal jokes and unintelligible slang, and narratives of their own experience in the College; for some of them have been in trouble themselves, and would account it but squeamishness to sophisticate the fact. They form a striking contrast to those downcast expectants who linger, sheep-faced, afar off, affecting to be casual spectators, and but rarely turning their eyes in the direction of the prison.

There goes the bell, striking the hour of nine; and, lo! the small door opens, and forth steps a female but not very feminine figure, draped in a fragmentary collection of garments, to which all the College ablutions and fumigations have failed to impart an air of decency. The wearer, who, all unabashed, lifts a bloated face to the general gaze, and responds coarsely to the coarse jokes that greet her reappearance, has been undergoing a month's penance, for the fifteenth time or so, for one of her drunken frolics attended with mischief. Bet Broil has a constitutional weakness in favour of 'wine-vaults,' and when she happens to be much under its influence, her organ of Destruiveness becomes excited. Of late years, she would seem to have nourished especial enmity against the Plate-glass Assurance Company, her exploits principally consisting of smashing assaults on shop-windows, which said Company has to make good. Bet, they say, is perfectly honest, scorning to steal a penny or a penny's worth, and she works hard at 'charring' and the wash-tub for her living, and is perfectly harmless when sober. Judging from her face, however, her wretched make-up, and her demonstrative assurance as she quits the College, her sobriety will be but of short duration. Her friend, who has been waiting for her, and who like herself struts with a rather defiant air, is not, we fear, likely to work her reformation.

As they are walking off together in the direction of Leather Lane, the door opens again, and out steps Charley Mullins. Charley is a pickpocket, aged sixteen, and has been of that adventurous profession for more than the half of his short life. His appearance is hailed with a buzz of applause from the chattering clique who throng round the entrance, and by a tender embrace from a pale-faced girl of thirteen, who has already united her fate with his. Charley, as he responds to her affections, cocks his off-leg in the air after the manner of Mr Jeremy Diddler in the farce. His head is horribly close cropped; his glossy black curls are gone, and he makes his appearance almost as bare-headed as a barber's block; but his

dear Nancy has provided for the emergency, and from the recesses of her garments she produces a crushed wide-awake, and punching it into shape with her little fist, claps it on his head, where the shadow of the broad brim effectually conceals the ravages of the cruel shears. A round number of the juveniles file off with Charley, in honour of whose restoration to society—he being an especial favourite—they will spend the day in jollity, and at night will hold a raffle for his benefit down at Snarley's, in Whitechapel. A first-rate 'wife,' prigg'd for the special purpose by little Piper, Charley's pet pupil, will be put up for competition; and the total proceeds, which may amount to fifteen or twenty pounds, will be handed over to the favourite, to enable him to lie by for a short period, or to rusticate a few months if he thinks fit.

You would not take the next person who comes forth for a collegian at all; you would rather fancy him a gentleman-visitor, or an officer of the institution, he so deliberate a manner, and carries himself with so lofty an air. His garb is of the finest broadcloth, and the fashionable close suit is enveloped in kind of cloak-like surtout, which flows gracefully round his slender limbs as he strides somewhat superbly through the throng. There are some, however, among the outsiders who know him well enough, spite of the loss of the splendid beard and whiskers and magnificent moustache which adorned his sallow face when, three months ago, he stepped from the College van at these sombre portals. That is Mr Marmaduke Slott, the swell smasher, the railway card-sharp, the pigeon-plucker, the bank-cheque sophisticator, and, in brief, the slippery customer with whom the police detectives ever had to deal. Slott ought to have been penalised nine years ago, and he would have been long since disposed of, but that he is such a clever dog there is no convicting him on a capital charge. A score of his cat-saws at least have been drafted off to the Isle of Portland or to the hulks, while he, their cunning principal, has remained unscathed. He owes his three months' confinement for a trifling offence to his notorious complicity in crimes for which he has escaped all punishment. When his back is turned, a good many eyes are gazing after him, and some very significant pantomime is exchanged between the knowing ones.

A very different subject is the next who makes his appearance. There is a loutish air about him, and his face bears the expression of one whom adverse fortune has cowed to cravenness, while goading into spite. He wears the fustian coat of a workman, but wants so altogether the workman's independent gait, that it is evident there is but little real work to be got out of him. As he comes forth, he looks round with a half-mandolin, half-savage stare; and when he emerges from the group round the door, his wife, with a rather hesitating step, comes forward to greet him. A couple of half-starved, tattered, and barefooted children are holding by her skirts, and even they are seen to shrink from the outstretched hand of the father, which, it is but too plain, is associated in their infant minds with something very different from fatherly caresses. The wife clutches his arm, and would lead the miserable man to her home, where, spite of her grinding poverty, she has prepared food and such welcome as she could for the father of her children. But they have barely reached the iron gates when they are joined by a couple of fellows who have been on the watch for the new-comer, and who, without a thought for the wife and children, seize each an arm of the husband, and lug him off in another direction. It is in vain that the woman begs and beseeches her infatuated tyrant to shake them off and come home. They, and he too, respond to her entreaties with hoarse mockery, and laughter, and jeers; the woman, driven desperate, resorts to blows and screams, and there is a brawl at the prison-gates, and a mob gathers round the wretched wife as she sinks

exhausted to the ground, while the dastard husband slips away through the fog with his tempters, and ere long will be again their simple tool and the scapegoat of their crimes.

And now a cab, which for the last half hour has been standing off just at the corner of the road, drives up to the prison-gates, to meet a young gentleman-like fellow, who, making his exit from the prison with his handkerchief to his face, walks rapidly to it, and plunging in at the open door, sinks out of sight in a moment. The widowed mother of the youth sits in that cab. He was the pride and hope of her life. For his sake, she has for long years impoverished herself and his fatherless sisters—sparing and pinching, first to pay for his education, and then to establish him in life. Placed at length in a merchant's office, where, by industry and integrity, he had the opportunity of repaying the sacrifices she had made, and of rising ultimately to respectability and wealth, he has fallen into vicious company and vicious habits; he has racked her with anxiety and apprehension; and has finally brought shame and dishonour to her hearth, by an act which has blasted his own prospects for ever, and beggared his family; for in that sad home to which they are hastening, the hapless inmates have parted with every comfort, almost every necessary of life, to avert the full penalty of his crime, and to save from utter degradation him who was so long the idol of their hearts.

The next vision is that of a young fellow who leaps out of the portal like Harlequin through a stage-window, but instead of attitudinising before the spectators, takes to a swift pair of heels, and is off like a shot. The omnibus that rattles past towards Gray's Inn is not half so fleet as he; in a minute, he has outstripped it, and vanished beyond in the embrace of the friendly fog. Judging from his costume, and from the fact that he has the grace to be ashamed of himself, he is probably some artisan more unlucky than criminal, whom some unsober frolic, some outbreak of temper, some fracas with the police, or perhaps a mad spirit of rivalry in daring, has consigned to temporary probation in the College, and who, having received his lesson, will not be likely in a hurry to need a repetition of it.

In no way resembling him is that loafing, pettifogging thief and area-sneak, committed to the treadmill for some door-mat affair, who comes forth with a grin, and who, all unconscious of shame, deliberately strolls off to the nearest gin-shop with his companions-in-waiting, to qualify the sweets of liberty with a dram.

Thus, one after another, the liberated denizens of the College emerge into the foggy air. Thieves, drunkards, wife-beaters, vagabonds, smashers, and various other students of humanity and honesty, come forth at nine o'clock, to enter once more upon the stage of the world, and testify to mankind what the discipline of the institution has effected towards their enlightenment and reformation. It is worthy of note that, with the exception of our friend who galloped off so fast, there is hardly a single one of the liberated band who is not waited for and welcomed on his restoration to society. Many who appear to walk off alone are yet joined by some sympathising friend ere they have gone many yards from the gates, and some have whole families in attendance to congratulate them on their freedom. Perhaps it is owing to the presence of so many sympathisers outside the walls, that we fail to recognise here the prison philanthropist, who should be on the spot to pick up any friendless wanderers from the path of rectitude, and lend them a helping-hand while they attempt to recover the right way. He is not here to-day; he is, however, represented in some sort by a middle-aged, sober-faced individual, who, furnished with a bundle of small square tracts, glides about among the throng round the door and amidst the several groups, distri-

buting his missives to those who will receive them. It is not always that those just enfranchised will deign to accept them; perhaps they think there is something personal and invidious in the offer at such a moment. Their refusal, however, does not deter the good man from repeating the experiment with others; and as the outsiders as well as the liberated come in for his donations, he manages to dispose of a considerable quantity of his little documents in a very short time. The drift and tendency of them all, if they were perused and carried out in practice, would certainly be to deprive the institution of any accession to the number of its inmates; and we can but wish the donor God-speed in his laudable endeavours in that direction.

#### THE MANIAC CRUSOE.

PERHAPS, of all the British colonies, the Bermudas are the least known to the stay-at-home inhabitants of the mother-country. Travellers speak and write of visiting the Bermudas, or Bermuda, quite indifferently. Shakspeare speaks of it—under the name of Bermoothes—as being 'still vexed'—which proves that it was the subject of considerable dispute even in his day. Thomas Moore came back from it with that mysterious 'chest-complaint'—defalcation in public moneys caused by his deputy, we believe—which has been the topic of so many evil rumours and worse puns. There is, in short, a general vagueness in regard to this respectable little colony, which atlases themselves are not very ready to dispel. Those persons who do not expect to find it in the neighbourhood of the Madeiras, almost invariably resorting to the map of the West India Islands, and—we need scarcely observe to the present intelligent Reader—completely without success.

The three hundred and sixty-five islands which form the Bermuda group, although entirely without fresh-water, and almost as flat as pancakes, are yet exceedingly fair; their cedar-covered shores fringing bays of the most exquisite beauty, wherein the tropic sea takes every colour from the various tinted coral rocks below. It is a pleasant trip, in that unequalled climate, when the wind is hushed, and the ocean forbears for a space to leap wrathfully at the surrounding reefs, to sail from isle to isle of that delightful archipelago, and explore each Liliputian domain. Deep water lies around every one of them, so that a ship of the line as large as themselves can sail between any two. Each with its cedar-forest, and tiny harbour defended by breakwaters formed by the laborious coral insect, is complete in itself—a fairy kingdom, especially adapted for picnic parties of moderate size; or for a pair of lovers; or in many cases—so infinitely small are some of the Bermudas—for half a pair. When I was a midshipman in his majesty's ship *Juventus*, stationed at St George's, I often let the tropic breezes carry my little boat to whatever yellow sands they pleased, where I would disembark, and take possession of the miniature territory in the name of Boyish Romance, and hoist my flag of blissful Independence there for the live-long day.

Compared with almost any other place on earth, such a spot was 'Dreamland, gorgeous land' indeed; but contrasted with the accommodation for midshipmen afforded by a man-of-war in the neighbourhood of the tropics, it really seemed—as a brother-middy, who must have had plum-cake in his mind, I fancy—like a little wedge cut out of heaven itself.

On one of these excursions, I landed upon Cedar Island—one of the very smallest of the group, and quite uninhabited—and after securing my boat in a little creek, wherein the azure wavelets rose and fell, as if in sleep, over a garden of blooming coral, I proceeded as usual to enact the part of Robinson Crusoe; that is to say, I loosened my dirk in its sheath, and commenced my exploration of the island, in order to make myself certain that if I was not, legally speaking, ‘lord of all I surveyed,’ there was at least nobody on the spot just then to dispute the fact. This was all romantic fanciful nonsense, I do not doubt; but since I have got completely rid of Romance and Fancy for these fifty years, I may confess my youthful weakness without a blush. I was a lad of very little judgment, I am afraid, in any way, and treated Billy Brown—who was the son of the captain’s clerk—just because I liked him, with a greater warmth than the Hon. Marmaduke Percy—also in our mess—whom I used in those days even to consider a sneak; but when I say that I have been ‘posted’ for some years, and shall soon be an admiral, it will be easily understood that I discarded those indiscriminating habits before it was too late.

Life, however, let the salt-water Cynics say what they will, is not *all* blarney and ship-seeking; and I protest—poor, enthusiastic, without-interest-with-the-first-Lord little middy as I then was—that I was pushing through the odorous woods of Cedar Island as happy a heart as ever I carried upon the day when I first got my second swab on my shoulders, when such a terrible cry burst forth within a few yards of me, that it froze my young blood within me, and haunted my old ears yet.

I have heard the roar of wild beasts by night when I have camped beside their drinking-places in the desert, with my trusty rifle for my sole companion; and I have heard the one piercing scream of a hundred drowning souls, whose vessel, struck amidships by our own in dark mid-ocean, was taking her final shuddering plunge; but neither sound was so frightful as that cry. Complete stillness had preceded it—for the dreamy lapping of the listless wave could not penetrate the thick grove wherein I stood, and the air had no strength to stir its heavy hearse-like plumes—and as inviolable was the quietness that followed. I heard my own heart beat quite audibly, and cautiously threading my way back to the boat—for, like a prudent commander, I did not mean to suffer my retreat to be cut off by the unknown foe—I trod on a dead stick, and it cracked like the firing of a pistol. As I reached the margin of the wood, the terrible cry broke forth again, filling sky and sea, but this time I was not so terrified; with sunlight and the open air returned the consciousness that I was an officer in his majesty’s navy (age 14), which, truth to say, in the dark cedar-wood I had somewhat lost sight of, and bound to fear neither Man nor Frenchman, which latter, in the days I write of, occupied the place now usually reserved in the like boastful asseverations for the Devil. I should certainly deserve to be broken by court-martial if I suffered myself to be driven off the island by a voice—*vox et præterea nihil*—however discordant. I turned again into the pigmy forest towards the spot whence the sound had proceeded, with my dirk in my right hand, ready to pick the teeth of whatever monster it might be—for the yell could scarcely have come from a human throat. Though I advanced with extreme circumspection, it was impossible to see above a couple of paces before me; and when the terrible cry broke forth for the third time, it was within a few feet of my ear. It was succeeded by a trampling of footsteps, the frantic impatience of which could be detected even upon the mossy ground on which they trod, and then there followed a hideous clanking, as of iron chains. I had at the moment little doubt but that it was the Enemy of Mankind himself,

and no other, who was thus exercising his lungs and legs upon this retired spot; but curiosity overcame terror, and reflecting that if I was a good boy, as I intended to be, I should in all probability never have another chance of seeing him, I passed between two cedar trunks that grew very near together, and beheld the following phenomenon.

Within a small open space or clearing, evidently made by the hand of man, there sat and gibbered, with a curious clatter of his teeth, the most frightful object that my eyes had ever looked upon. With my present knowledge, I should have set him down at once as a specimen of the gorilla; but plunged in the dark ignorance of fifty years back, as I was, I still clung to the opinion I had originally entertained of his being Auld Hornie. He had no visible horns, it is true, but he wore a tail whose length report had by no means exaggerated; a long and ragged black beard covered his face almost up to his fiery eyes; his bare hairy arms were beating a monotonous measure upon his lap, which I set down as ‘the Devil’s Tattoo;’ and to complete his Satanic character, as described by both philosophers and divines, he had a good deal of the Woman about him. He wore her bonnet, at least, torn, and frayed, and filthy to a very extraordinary degree, and her petticoats tattered and draggled; but beyond these, truth and gallantry alike compel me to admit that all resemblance to a lady ceased.

The prevailing expression of his forbidding face was that of intense malice—malignant hatred of all living things—but while I looked at it, fascinated by its exceeding horror, it changed to one of exulting fiendish triumph; and with a cry similar to his other yells, but ten times more frightful from the action that accompanied it, he leaped at me with his arms in air, and his black hands stiffened like talons. I could not run although it was, very literally, to save my life; and only when I saw that he had fallen short of his spring, half-strangled by a chain that was round his middle, and which, attached to a huge cedar behind him, I had taken for his tail, did my faculties slowly recover from their stupefaction. Supposing these iron links held out, and so long as I avoided the clear space which was the limit of his tether, I felt myself safe, and thankful, indeed, that I had not unknowingly trespassed within that fatal circle. Huge bones were strewed about it in plenty, though whether of man or beast, I could not tell; but how they had got there did not then awaken my wonder, so entirely was I wrapped up in the movements of the mysterious being before me. Having failed in his murderous attempt, he did not renew it, but retired slowly towards his prison-tree, which was situated in the centre of the space, and appeared to forget my intrusion altogether. There was a short stump of a cedar which had been unscientifically felled, beside it, and upon that he proceeded to enact what I afterwards identified with the most awful scene of the drama of his evil life. He took up a small billet of wood, and approaching the stump, appeared to regard something upon it, which I could not discern—which, indeed, was not there at all—with an air of mockery and insult; he pointed at it, spurned it scornfully with his foot, seemed to whisper to it gibing questions, and finally throwing back his bonnet so as to expose his entire countenance distorted with passion, he struck down at the impalpable substance with the billet, and uttered the frightful cry which had at first so startled me. The whole pantomime, hideous as it was, was far too real to be a mere act of animal imitation; and the Satanic theory being abandoned, I felt also confident that no ape of the woods was before me, but the form, grown wild and bestial, of what had been once a fellow-creature. There was little doubt of his being both mad and dangerous, but it was certainly a most cruel and unjustifiable act to keep him thus chained upon an uninhabited island, to become daily more and more assimilated to the brute creation;

and I jumped into my boat at once, determined, upon my arrival at St George's, to immediately make known what I had seen to the proper authorities.

Since my landing on Cedar Island, however, a breeze had sprung up contrary to my course, and by the time I reached the harbour, it was close upon the hour when I was engaged to dine with Mr Merton, one of the principal inhabitants of the town, which was then the seat of government. The second-lieutenant of the *Juventus*, and a great patron of mine, was of the party; and finding myself opposite to him, I took occasion to ask across the table whether he knew anything of Cedar Island and its one awful inhabitant. I received for answer such a kick upon my young shins as only lieutenants can inflict, and miscreants endure; whereby I understood that the subject was not one to be publicly discussed, and, indeed, as it was, my question seemed to freeze the conversation for several minutes. After dinner, however, and while the company were seated in different groups smoking their cheroots in the huge veranda looking on the sea, my naval superior took occasion to tell me that I was the most lubberly young jackass, in respect to the spoiling of an agreeable party, that had ever been foaled; after which exordium he was good enough to render me his reasons.

'You've been talking of a rope in the house of a man whose father was hanged, youngster,' he began; 'and I advise you to pitch into supper to-night, as it will certainly be the last meal you will put your young grinders to in this house. This very Mr Merton, whose hospitality you have so shamefully abused'—here the second-lieutenant grinned like a badger in spite of himself—'was a little more than fast in his hot youth. He had not only those vices on which these good Bermuda folks look with such charitable eyes, but on one occasion he was very nearly joining one of the settlements yonder, where people wear their rings made of iron instead of gold, and round the ankle instead of the finger. He broke the law, and was, in short, within a very little of being a convict. Before that, however, he had been so bad a man of business, that his father, who still loved him tenderly, would not keep him in his office, but employed as chief clerk, in his place, a creole, named Blagden, whom he had raised from a very humble position. I remember the fellow well, a handsome chap enough, but with a wicked, unforgiving eye—one to whom it would have done a world of good to have taken a voyage in his majesty's ship *Juventus*, with your humble servant officer of his watch, I reckon—and without one ounce of gratitude in his composition. Not satisfied with having ousted our friend here from his natural position, he tried to poison his father's mind against him, so as to be made heir in his stead; but failing in that, and always in want of money for certain diversions of his own, he robbed his employer to the extent of some four thousand pounds. Old Mr Merton very properly prosecuted him, and the villain was sentenced to penal servitude for twenty years. After his doom was pronounced, he told the prosecutor in open court that he would be even with him yet; to which the old gentleman is said to have replied, that he hoped he (Blagden) might get the chance—that is to say, the opportunity of revenging himself, after twenty years, upon him (the prosecutor), who was at that time more than sixty years of age.'

It was almost immediately after this that our host here got into trouble with the authorities. What was his exact offence, I do not know, but it was not so serious but that there was a doubt whether he ought to have been committed—as he was—for trial. Mr Merton, senior, who, like many fathers who blame their sons, was far from liking other people to find fault with them, was beyond measure infuriated at the disgrace thus fixed upon the young man, and swore revenge against the magistrate,

one Mr Frederic Miller, who happened to be a personal enemy of his, and whom he therefore concluded to have committed his son from feelings of malice; and this indeed seems probable, since in the end the prisoner was acquitted of the crime in question. In this passionate state of mind, Mr Merton, senior, loaded his pistols, and rode away towards his enemy's house, with the intention, doubtless, of making him fight a duel there and then. Upon his road, he had the misfortune to meet with Mr John Miller, the magistrate's brother; and an altercation ensuing, and that gentleman angrily espousing his relative's part, old Mr Merton lost what little temper he had left, and pulling out a pistol, shot him dead. Now, although he always declared that this meeting with John Miller was accidental, and that that person had first struck him with his riding-whip, he thought it extremely probable that he should not be believed. Many persons, as he was well aware, had heard him vow vengeance that very day against Miller—without mentioning whether it was Frederic or John—and it occurred to him, in his excitement and flurry, that that would condemn him; and having, in short, taken a hasty view of what was certainly a very ugly business, the old gentleman made up his mind to be off, and not stand his trial. His disappearance of course saved him for the time, but was doubtless worse for him afterwards, since it was taken as a proof of his guilt. An active search was made for him for a week or two, and then the authorities gave it up, concluding, naturally enough, that he had embarked in one of the numerous vessels which, bound for all parts of the world, were starting daily from St George's.

'Within a month of the manslaughter or murder, however, Captain Stone, the head of the police, received an anonymous letter, asserting that old Mr Merton was still upon the island, and for certain reasons, also given in the communication, was even yet probably in his own house. Captain Stone therefore walked down to this very house that afternoon, and having been shewn into that same dining-room, where you have just made yourself so pleasant, narrated his errand to our host yonder—who was out on bail—and his mother, who were sitting together over their dessert.

"You may search the house, captain, if you will, with all my heart," replied Mrs Merton, "but it has already been done by your subordinates: you cannot imagine, I should think, that my poor husband would be foolish enough to hide in the very place where everybody would be looking for him."

The captain bowed, took advantage of her permission to go over the place, and presently returning to the dining-room, expressed himself satisfied that all was right. Though he took his leave and walked away, however, it was only to return to a spot under cover of some shrubs, where, unseen himself, he could command a view of the dining-room window, which, as you know, opens upon the garden. He had observed, during his brief visit, three dessert plates upon the table—which is one more than is necessary for two persons, you see—and being of a curious turn of mind, he wanted to find out what was done with the odd one. Presently, he saw Mrs Merton—the same old lady who sat at the head of the table this very day—heap up this third plate with a quantity of fruit, and, looking straight out of the window all the time, stretch down her hand with it under the table, and bring it up again with no plate at all. Then Captain Stone rose up from behind the bush—at which she gave a most dreadful scream, poor woman—and walking straight up to the window, opened it, and pulling aside the dinner-table, discovered a certain trap-door, which I do not doubt was under your own feet an hour ago.'

'This place of concealment, constructed during some panic concerning a black insurrection, had only been

known before the writing of the anonymous letter to one person beside the Merton family—namely, to the creole Blagden. Captain Stone lifted the trap, and took the poor old man—so unshaved, forlorn, and haggard, that he would not have recognised him under ordinary circumstances—and carried him off to St George's Jail. He had not been a popular person before this misfortune befel him, but the public feeling was a good deal excited in his favour, especially on account of the manner in which he had been taken under his wife's eyes; so that when he was condemned to be beheaded—which was the capital punishment of the Bermudas in those days—there was hard work to find an executioner. This office was always hateful to the islanders, and whoever performed it, was accustomed to be disguised by wearing a mask and dressing in female costume. Upon the occasion of Mr Merton's execution, however, and in spite of the strong sympathy evinced for him, the wretch who had volunteered to perform the office of headsman behaved himself with cruel indecency, leaping and dancing in his hideous masquerade before the face of the criminal, as he was led up to the scaffold, and exciting thereby the horror and indignation of the spectators. Poor Mr Merton, however, took no notice of his proceedings until the time had come for him to lay his head upon the block; then, indeed, a shudder passed over his pallid face, as the executioner stooping down and pulling aside his mask, disclosed the malignant countenance of his creole clerk!

"I told you I would be even with you, and I am," yelled the wretch as he struck the fatal blow; and holding up the severed head before the crowd, he uttered such a cry of gratified malice as chilled the hearts of all who heard it!—

"I have heard that cry," said I, interrupting the lieutenant; "I saw the whole scene of that execution played out to-day."

"It is like enough," replied he; "for the man you saw upon Cedar Island was certainly he. The convict had greedily volunteered for this frightful duty, as being the highest pleasure that was left for him, but the matter did not turn out altogether as he expected. The people would have torn him to pieces upon the spot, lunatic as he plainly was—for the scene had been too much for his own frenzied brain—had it not been for the military, and were only soothed by the promise that he should be confined for life, in his executioner's garb, as you beheld. Winter or summer, wet or fair, there will he remain, a victim in mind and body to his own ingratitude and lust for vengeance. The whole story is not without its moral as regards the punishment of civil-doers," added the lieutenant drily; "but nobody but a midshipman, I suppose, would have thought of asking for the narration of it in the house of one of the principal sufferers."

#### BOWS AND ARROWS.

ENGLISHMEN needed not the authority of Napoleon III. to assure them that British archers constituted the best light infantry of their epoch; nevertheless, since the emperor has intimated this much in his treatise, *Sur le Passé et l'Avenir de l'Artillerie*, the testimony may be accepted as a guarantee that Britons do not overrate the prowess of their archers. The long-bow could only have been developed into a formidable weapon of war under the circumstance of two favouring conditions: a race of great physical force; and a government not afraid to permit the existence within it of an armed populace. Now-a-days, it is considered that, under the pressure of military necessities, a clod-hopper can be drilled—*metamorphosed*—by three months' training into a moderately efficient soldier. The fact is, that the act of shooting with fire-

arms involves the exercise of but little physical force; and as regards the skill involved by small-arm practice, even rifle-shooting, which implies the highest development of that skill, can be acquired in a much shorter time than that necessary to make a proficient in the use of the long-bow. The old English archer only acquired his dexterity by commencing when a child. Bows and arrows were his sport and pastime, as balls and bats are of English children now.

Various English sovereigns had the sagacity to foster the practice of archery by every available means. Well, indeed, might they do so, considering the salutary dread in which the long-bow's cloth-yard shaft was held as a military weapon. Here attention may be drawn to a very significant fact. Archery, as a military system, could never have been developed as we find it under the circumstances of a mere standing army. If some medieval Enfield lock small-arms factory had turned out long-bows in the reign of Edward III.—bows all studiously made to one unvarying pattern, constructed of equal strength and equal length—English archers might have gone forth to battle, indeed, but they would have made sorry shooting. The bow in those days was a *tar*, a sort of household god; it was a pet weapon, accommodated after many a trial to the exact height and strength of the individual who had to use it. No modern sportsman, luxuriating in his eighty-guinea Lancaster double-barrelled rifle, could be more fastidious than was the old English archer in regard to his bow. Archery-practice, for many centuries, was prosecuted in England with a degree of assiduity only comparable to rifle-shooting amongst the modern Swiss and Tyrolese; and if a fat buck got pierced illicitly now and then, the offence was winked at, in consideration of the military advantages secured to England by the practice of archery.

In truth, however, the long-bow was a weapon not well adapted to sporting. It could lay no just claim to the accuracy of the archalist, or cross-bow. The old English archer would have been laughed at, indeed, who should fail to hit a man 200 yards away; but he would have been held excused for missing a fat buck's head at that distance—the head then, as now, being the object of aim, lest the venison should receive injury. The long-bow, as the Emperor Napoleon III. aptly remarks, furnishes an illustration of the well-known mechanical axiom, that what is lost in power is gained in velocity. An archer could discharge no less than twelve arrows per minute, whereas an archalist in the same time could only shoot three bolts. True, a bolt had greater penetrative force than an arrow for equal distances; but considering that an arrow, at 200 yards, could go quite through an oaken plank from an inch and a half to two inches thick, the penetration of it must generally have sufficed. The full complement of ammunition for British infantry at the present time is sixty rounds; the old English archer was less favoured in this respect, he being only able to carry twenty-four arrows. But the archalist was still in a worse position; in consequence of the weight of his ammunition, he could only carry eighteen bolts. An archer's accoutrements were compact and handy; those of a cross-bowman cumbersome and straggling. The long-bow, vertically held, permitted archers to stand almost shoulder to shoulder; whereas the bow of the archalist, mounted transversely, necessitated a loose order of marshalling, and, moreover, presented the serious inconvenience of necessitating exposure to adverse weather. Casing up a

cross-bow was, owing to its shape, impossible; whereas a long-bow might be put under cover with no difficulty.

The long-bow may be considered a purely *English* weapon; that is to say, it only rose into eminence after the various conquering races which invaded this island had amalgamated into one people. Whether the Normans possessed the long-bow, on their arrival among us, is still a disputed point; certain it is, they habitually used the arbalist. The Saxons possessed a sort of long-bow, indeed, but it was an instrument of altogether insignificant power, by comparison with the tremendous weapon which achieved such conquests as Crecy, Poitiers, and Agincourt.

There was another cause for the excellence of the English archers besides their physical strength. The middle and lower classes had acquired an importance, through their great charter, not participated in by any other contemporary people. It was the tendency of political institutions on the continent to restrict military service to the noblesse; whereas in England, Magna Charta elevated the middle and lower classes into a position of military equality with those socially above them. The right of general armament being conceded, it is easy to imagine causes for determining a predominance of the long-bow, as a weapon for the middle and lower classes. At once cheap and powerful, it necessitated neither horse nor armour. Free-men could grow adepts in its use, though that use could never be efficiently acquired by forced dependants.

The battle of Crecy affords the earliest noteworthy occasion of the power of British archery. The results of that celebrated encounter, though most disastrous to our enemies, did not fill them with that amount of respect for the long-bow which they afterwards acquired. The result of Poitiers, ten years later, opened their eyes. The inferiority of the arbalist to the long-bow was then fully recognised; so that, about the year 1394, the French lower classes were enjoined to supply themselves with the English weapon, and to practise archery. According to the testimony of Juvenal des Ursins, they succeeded so well in their new war-exercise, that they made fair to excel their English rivals, which, we are coolly informed, stirred up the jealousy of the cavalier order, who beginning to fear the archers might grow too powerful for them, put down the bow-practice.

He who desires to make himself acquainted with what the long-bow could really accomplish, will do well to scan the records of that transition period when archers and musketeers were found acting in the same ranks. Naturally enough, each weapon had its partisans, and they recorded their opinions in language of no small energy. An impartial scrutiny of this branch of literature can hardly fail to beget the impression that the archers had the best of it. They could make ten or twelve shots to a musketeer's one, and even more, under favourable circumstances. Long-bows were light to carry, and arrows could not be 'blown up,' whereas the ancient musketeer staggered along under the weight of his firearm; and his ammunition was subject to explode with a facility which modern riflemen little dream of; for be it remembered, the ancient musketeer carried his gunpowder almost loose, in dangerous propinquity to a piece of smouldering rope's end, which served him for a match. It is almost unnecessary to mention that the now antiquated flintlock was, in that epoch, entirely unknown. The fact appears tolerably well established, that, out of a given number of hits, musket-balls caused more immediate deaths than a corresponding number of hits from arrow-shots; but, on the other hand, arrow-shots were the more fatal. The rankling wounds caused by a barbed arrow-head were terrible. They would be considered terrible by military surgeons of the

present day; how fatal must they have proved in the hands of medieval practitioners!

The greatest complaint advanced against the practice of musketry by advocates of the long-bow, was the lack of effect of musket-shots against cavalry horses. It was contended that, if a horse were killed outright by a musket-shot, well and good; but if not, that the animal took no immediate notice of the injury: it never became unmanageable, which was a great point lost. On the other hand, a barbed arrow, sticking in a horse's side, however insignificant the wound caused by it, drove the animal frantic. For the horseman to remain seated was impossible—off he must come. Doubtless this statement is not overdrawn. History collaterally substantiates it. Whenever foreign chivalry had to encounter British archers for the second time, they invariably dismounted, and did battle on foot. The necessity of doing so was taught the French at Crecy, so that ten years subsequently, at Poitiers, the French cavaliers, sorely against their will (for they thought there was a loss of dignity in the matter), offered battle for the most part on foot. Three hundred men-of-arms, however, remained in the saddle, so that they might be in readiness to fall upon the broken English archers. Their services were not required, as it turned out; and for the rest, horses and riders were almost annihilated by English cloth-yard shafts. In all the battles at about this period wherein the English were concerned, the archers were of greater avail than all the chivalry. On some occasions, the latter shewed some little jealousy at the secondary part they were made to play in the field of battle; but as surely as they tried to place archers in the background, so surely did a reverse happen to vindicate the archers. For example, in 1421, the battle of Baugé was fought; although, as we were beaten on that occasion, one does not hear much about it. The defeat was mainly attributable to the cavaliers having taken it into their heads to begin the battle without any aid from the archers.

The real shortcomings of the long-bow had no reference to its capacity as a projectile, but to the difficulty experienced by archers in defending themselves when their arrows were exhausted. Archers were excellent light infantry—nothing more. Pikemen had to be mingled with them in certain proportions, one-third being about the usual complement. During the reign of Charles I., an attempt was made to combine the pike with the bow in a compound weapon, as the musket and bayonet are used in combination now, a spear-head having been attached to one extremity of the bow. Whether the adoption might have got into vogue at an earlier epoch, is questionable; but firearms having arrived, by the time of Charles I., at a certain development, the scheme of *pike-bow* never came into use. The mere proposition of attaching a spear-head to a bow shews expressively enough how stiff and powerful an English war-bow must have been. The musket, from the first, readily lent itself to the double application of a projectile weapon and a pike. Musketeers were, about 1671, furnished with daggers fitting into the muzzle, thus suggesting the present bayonet. This weapon, in its modern form, was first employed by Marshal Catinat in 1693 at the battle of Marsaglin, on which occasion the slaughter was immense. Notwithstanding this success, it was not until two other great victories had been achieved by bayonets—namely, the battle of Spires in 1703, and that of Caleinato in 1705—that they were adopted by other nations.

As soon as the bayonet was modernised and rendered handy, the pike, of course, went out. It was abolished by royal ordinance in France in 1703, with the sanction of Marshal Vauban. There is no fighting civilised nation which does not lay claim to the bayonet as its own peculiar weapon. Let not the bold Briton solace himself with the belief that he is

*par excellence* a bayonetist. It was the pet arm of Souvaroff, who highly eulogised it; and the French of late have added still further terrors to the bayonet by making it cut as well as thrust. Something has been said of late about bayonets, when fixed, helping to deflect a ball and damage shooting, but, in reality, they do nothing of the kind.

### THE BATEMAN HOUSEHOLD, AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.—A SERIOUS PIRATE.

HAVING thus achieved his main object, Marsden purchased another horse and cart at a reasonable rate in Melbourne, and lading them with his various purchases, retraced his steps with an exulting heart towards Marycross. Nor must we judge the young man too harshly for his want of penitence for the wrong he had done to the purchaser of his black mare. No man that has had much to do with horse-flesh is a moralist; and, moreover, Robert Marsden's principles were of that not uncommon sort which are dependent almost entirely upon circumstances. With two thousand a year, and a house in the country, his honesty would have remained irreproachable; but being poor, he was little better than one of the wicked. His conscience had peeled off with every shock of Fortune—not being protected by any effective moral buffer whatever—until there was but a very thin coating left of it indeed. It was essentially a conscience for fair weather; and the outside gloss of 'social position' being removed, the delicate fabric went to pieces with great rapidity. There was, however, no palliation for his chuckling as he did over his successful roguery, as he drove along. It whimsically occurred to him, that whatever might be said against the mare, must needs be exaggerated; for he knew, and none better, that with all her faults, *she was not so black as she was painted*, and this doubtful *jeu d'esprit* afforded him fits of merriment. With money in his pocket, and with money making in the building concern, and with having thoroughly outwitted a horse-dealer—with all things having worked, and working, well in short—why should not Mr Robert Marsden have been hilarious? Alas, alas! Fate has the grimdest reasons of her own no mortal can fathom! Nemesis was awaiting the poor young fellow as he drove along with the smile upon his lips, and the blithe twinkle in his eye, evoked by the coming recital of his tricks to his appreciative partner. Into what Limbo such never-fledged anticipations drop, we know not, but there has been certainly an enormous brood of them since credulous Eve ate of the apple, which might have grown by the Dead Sea for any good to be got from it. When Marsden got to Marycross late on the second evening, and after his fortnight's absence, there was no Miles Ripon to whom to tell his story, and no roof-tree to tell it under. Friend and home were alike departed, for poor Miles had been murdered and buried, and the house that had sheltered him was but a heap of cold wood-ashes. Marsden pulled up his new purchase upon her haunches, and surveyed the desolate scene with such a passion flaming in his heart as dried up, perhaps, certain springs of good in it for ever. Six months ago, he would have mourned the untimely fate of an only friend, and over the havoc which had been wrought upon what had been, upon the whole, a pleasant home; he would have 'set the law in motion,' and placed the affair in the hands of the best detective;

but now, and in Marycross, he released his jaded steed, and tied her to the nearest tree, looked carefully to the caps of his revolver, and took his way to the American quarter of the Diggers' camp. The moon shone brightly upon the half-dozen huts which formed the Yankee settlement, but there was no sign of life to be seen in any one of the first five; they presented the appearance of having been suddenly quitted by their inhabitants, but whether voluntarily or upon compulsion, it was impossible to tell; if the former, their absence would be only temporary, since cooking-vessels, and even uncooked food, lay about the floors and on the simple shelves. The sixth hut was similarly deserted by the living, but the shadow of a dead man suspended from a neighbouring tree fell across the lintel. When he had walked up to this ghastly figure and satisfied himself that it was indeed that of Mithridates Pontus Chips, Marsden drew the first full breath that he had drawn since he had become aware of the foul wrong that had been done to him and his.

'I knew you would come here,' said a low husky voice beside him, which his ears at once recognised as Old Simon's. 'I have waited here every night since it was done. They said you would surely come to the store and ask first, but I knew you better. I stood by the poor young fellow until they knocked me down with a pistol-but, but what was an old man like me against so many? It was at night—the second night after you left—when the murdering thieves set on him, and we could get no help. I had shut up my store, and was at your house when it happened—for happen I knew it would—but we could get no one else to watch with us. They wanted *you*, they said, and since they could not find you, they shot poor Miles. He told Chips to his face that you would come back soon, and follow him as sure as death; and after the coward shot him, he would have fled the place for fear of you; I raised the Station on him, however, and we Lynch'd him as you see. He died there whining and howling like a dog.'

'And the others?' inquired Marsden sternly.  
'Where are the rest?'

'They are hundreds of miles away by this time, beggars and outcasts; henceforth, no diggings are safe for them to dwell in, and we did not suffer them to take so much as a pannikin away with them. All that is here is yours—it was voted so—materials for a better hut than that which has been burnt; but I would persuade you, if I could, to dwell henceforth under my roof. All your goods, or nearly all, had been removed thither in safety. I got Ripon to let me have them in keeping the very day you left. Cheer up, my friend, cheer up, for you are young, and may do well yet.'

'Not here,' replied Marsden with a groan; 'not at Marycross, by the grave of my murdered friend—for he was my friend, and faithful and true to me. He has been avenged in part, and that was the sole work that could have delayed me in this accursed spot. I am sorry to part with you, old man; I thank you kindly for what you have done, and what you have striven to do, and I will stay with you a day or two before I go, and while I make my final arrangements, if you are really so disposed. Pah!—let us leave this Carrion. How wretched is it that things so contemptible can do us so much evil!'

'Ay, sir,' said Old Simon, as they walked together slowly towards the store; 'but we must remember that there is another side to that matter. The mouse sometimes assists the lion. The decayed, decrepit old man often supplies to youth the means of living in happiness and comfort. You would not guess, I reckon, that it is in my power, now, to place you, in

all human probability, above the reach of Fortune's malice.'

'You have got some poison in your store, old man, I reckon,' replied Marsden bitterly.

'I have a secret, lad, to possess which most men of your age, ay, and some of mine, would hazard life and barter limb. I swear to you that I know where more than one hundred thousand pounds is to be had for the digging away of a few feet of river-sand; not in Australian nuggets, but in good coined gold of the Spanish empire.'

'Can you tell me, by the by, what moneys I have expended on your account since I was in Melbourne?' answered Marsden quietly; 'for I have had the misfortune to lose the memorandum.'

'I can,' replied the old man calmly, and evincing no astonishment at so abrupt a question; 'and I will.' And with that he went through the commissions with which he had intrusted Marsden, with the correctness of one who has the invoice in his hands. 'I know,' said he, when he had finished, 'why you have demanded this of me; and I hope I have convinced you that Old Simon at least keeps his wits.'

'You have,' said Marsden gravely, 'and I believe you therefore; for I do not think you would lie to me. Do you mean to tell me more of this hidden treasure?'

'I will tell you this night, lad, this very night, for my time is getting short for telling of anything, and it has been upon my tongue to reveal it to you again and again. But for me this bloodshed would not have happened, and I owe you such reparation as lies in my power.'

They had reached the entrance of the store by this time, and Marsden was stepping in, when a curious proceeding of the old man drew his attention, and almost reproduced a suspicion of his want of sanity. Old Simon heaved up with some difficulty a huge flat stone which always lay at the door of the log-hut, poised it for a few minutes over his head, and then let it fall to the earth with a heavy thud.

'I came to this place at three-score-and-ten,' said he, observing the young man's look of wonder, 'when most men are thinking of their graves, and every evening, for eleven years, have I lifted up that stone to see how my strength decays. I had an especial reason in doing so this night, and have an especial pleasure in feeling that some strength yet remains to me.' Old Simon locked the door behind them, and producing two strange-shaped pipes, some rare tobacco, and some excellent Hollands, observed, in apology for the moonlight, that neither fire nor candle could shew whether a tale was true or not, and that for his part he preferred to spin a yarn in the dark.

The listening to him through the dead silence of that night, only broken by the hoarse voice of the ancient gray-beard, telling of things that happened before the young man's birth, but when the narrator himself had been even then a middle-aged man, seemed to his auditor to be like listening to the voice of Time itself. There were long pauses when Old Simon's breath grew short, or when, as it seemed, he was rejecting such experiences of his life as did not bear upon his present subject, and nothing was heard sometimes for minutes saving the puffing at the antique pipes with carven heads; but whether it was that the theory of Mr Onslow Bateman concerning tobacco did really hold good, or whether the listener's personal interest in the subject was too great for weariness, certain it is the morning sun shone in upon the pair without exhibiting a trace of fatigue in either of them.

'It is unnecessary to commence three generations back,' began Old Simon, 'and to tell you what I was at your age, or what I did; to me, such a retrospect would not be pleasing, and to you, who only see what I now am, it would be as though I talked of some third person with whom you had naught to do. Enough to say that I was a British seaman, who served with

Nelson—"our Nelly," as we used to call him—in more than one engagement, but with whom the discipline of a man-of-war did not for long agree. I was a mutineer and a deserter. I was a privateersman, and then I was a pirate. I joined the famous Captain Mitchell in the Spanish Main, of whom, even at this distance of time, you must have heard—a man who fought under Carthaginian colours in the war against Spain, but who had always his black flag on board, with the death's-head and cross-bones, nevertheless. It was a wicked, cruel life we led, but it was a stirring one; one to which the risks and dangers of these Diggings are no more to be compared than is a puff of south wind to a tornado. I never thought of being sorry for anything then, nor of any duty save that to myself and to my captain; but when all one's companions are dead—half of them swinging still, too, in iron chains—one can't help thinking differently. Jack Bryde, Jefferson, and I, were, with the exception of Mitchell himself, the greatest dare-devils, if not the worst, of all our crew. That drew us four together perhaps, for companionships are often forged of very queer metal. Our station was in the Caribbean Sea and off the mouth of the Magdalena River, when news came to the captain, by a certain hand, of a vast booty that might be gotten by a few determined fellows such as we were, and he confided it to us. Less than four could not possibly have managed the matter; more than four would have seriously diminished the shares of the plunder, for every able-bodied man amongst us had an equal profit, whether he was on the quarter-deck or before the mast, and therein lay the great charm in the life of a bucanier. The captain might shoot you down like a dog, and would do so if you disobeyed him in action, or so much as muttered at his commands while at sea; but we all had a voice in the sailing orders—as to where we should watch for prizes, and when we should go into port—and were all equal, one with another, except on rare occasions. We four, then, were to make this expedition, unknown to and independently of the ship's company, and to take the risks and profits on our own heads. The great news consisted in this: that the people in the interior, becoming alarmed at the disturbed state of the country, were sending away their gold home to Spain; and in particular, that a large treasure was coming down the Magdalena in canoes the ensuing night from Santa Fé de Bogotá, to be shipped on board of a Spanish man-of-war which would be waiting for it at the river-mouth.

That same evening, therefore, we took one of the ship's boats, and, armed to the teeth, sailed up ten miles or so, and there waited all next day, in hiding, upon the right bank of the river. It would have seemed a wild eerie place enough, I daresay, if the errand we had come upon had been less important and risky, and we could have thought about anything else. The banks of the river were pierced by long winding creeks, which ran into swampy lagoons, with low black islands in them, which were, however, nothing but vast masses of water-fowl, which would rise with clangour and flutter as we approached, and then settle again at a little distance on. Hundreds of pelicans, gaunt sentries of all this watery wilderness, fished on by the river-side as we went by, as though they knew our business had nothing to do with theirs; and alligators in swarms swam lazily about our boat, or lay like dirty logs under the roots of the few mango-trees by the creek-sides. Above the creeks, the luxuriant vegetation sometimes formed a complete arch, and it did so in our hiding-place; but except the mango-trees, there was no tree in sight save one—a tamarind-tree close by upon our left. You must remember well that tamarind, lad, for it has golden roots! Presently, from our place of concealment, we saw one of the large canoes of the country coming slowly down-stream, from the direction of Santa Fé. These are about fifty feet long and five wide, and are

generally manned by some half-dozen natives. There were six on board of this one, beside a Spanish commander, or Padrone, in charge of the treasure. About twenty feet of the centre of the canoe was covered over with a framework of poles, and thatched with mats, but the Boxes in search of which we had come were placed on the open deck. At sight of these, we looked to the priming of our pistols, loosened our cutlasses in their sheaths, pulled swiftly out of cover upon the doomed canoe, and boarded her like incarnate fiends. Mitchell shot down the Spaniard, I myself killed two of the poor natives, and the other four wretched creatures took to the water, and were picked off by our guns as soon as they shewed their heads. In ten minutes we had murdered seven of our fellow-creatures—not in cold blood, indeed, but in blood madly heated with the passionate desire for gold; and with all that sin laid upon our souls, despite that blood-watering, our work was fated after all to bear—at least for us—no fruit whatever. The canoe was scarcely ours, and had drifted but a little way down the stream, when we heard the measured stroke of a man-of-war's launch coming up the river. We knew at once that it came from the Spanish vessel, and had been sent to meet that very boat we had just captured. We turned the head of the unwieldy craft as fast as we could, and lowering the sail, lest it should attract their eyes, even in that dim moonlight, we put out the long sweeps, and pulled away as fast as we could, with our little boat in tow, into the sheltering creek. Through the leafy canopy we watched the great launch go by, so near that we could even hear the disappointment expressed at the weary distance the rowers had to pull to meet the treasure, and their curses upon the sluggish boatmen, who were lying dead in the stream beneath them while they spoke.

As soon as she had gone by, we carried the gold to land with a great deal of difficulty; it was in eight enormous boxes, each weighing about two hundred and fifty pounds, made of thick planks of cedar, and bound with green hide. We had little time to lose, but we could not forbear from bursting one of these open with our cutlasses, and laying bare its precious contents. We found it full of Spanish gold doubloons, with their edges packed so closely together that Jefferson had to prise one out with his clasp-knife in order to loosen the row. To have carried any quantity of it away in our then circumstances would have been madness, but each of us took a handful of the coin and filled our pockets with it. Then we dug a vast hole in the light sand with our oar-blades, and buried the whole of the treasure beneath the tamarind-tree. That was more than a score of years ago, lad; but, to the best of my belief, that money has never since been fingered by mortal hand. We scuttled the canoe, and sank her, and rowed out cautiously to the mouth of the river in our own boat. Our thoughts, in spite of our great danger, were all running upon the mighty fortune each one had obtained for himself, and upon what each would do with it. I remember *my* notion was, that I would be no more a pirate, but would make my last home in peaceful Devonshire—where my first had been—and within hearing of those old cathedral chimes. Only when Jack Bryde spoke of what he would do at Carthagena, and all the vice and folly he meant to plunge in, I said that I would join him, for one, for my good intentions were so extremely new that I was ashamed of them.

'All of a sudden, as we neared the river-mouth, where the sea breaks into huge rollers, and vast legs and pieces of wood are thrown up by it momently, all along that coast-line, Mitchell made us pause, and bade us each swear that none would venture back to the treasure unless in company with the others, as well as call down curses upon ourselves if any such thought was harbouring in our breasts. At this, Jefferson

began to blaspheme like a madman, saying that he was not one who would ever play false with his friends, and that might he die if he had ever meant otherwise. And it was strange enough that, in the midst of this, he fell down in the bottom of the boat, as if with a sun-stroke, although it was near midnight, and presently yelled so, that we were afraid his cries would attract the attention of the Spanish watch on board the vessel round which we had to creep before we could approach our own. He was dead, poor fellow—the first of the four to go—within five hours after we were on board, of yellow fever, and did not enjoy his golden secret long. After that, we had seven days of the most dreadful storm that I ever remember; we lay-to for all that time with the smallest possible amount of canvas, and with the helm lashed. Not only were the windows of Heaven opened as though for a second Deluge—and there could certainly have been no wickeder folks in the first world than were our ship's company—but, for minutes, the whole sky was fenced off into black patches of cloud by zigzag hedges of lightning, like great fiery snakes diving into the sea, which in their course downward sent up lesser snakes from every fork of them. Sometimes on the tops of the masts and down the stays, small balls of the same electric fire were to be seen, which with the lightning would so illuminate space that for a second or two every rope and spar could be seen; after which the darkness could be felt again oppressive as a weight.

'I am no coward now, lad, and certainly had steady nerves at the time I speak of, but I was fairly scared. It seemed to me as though a curse had fallen upon us through butchering the crew of that canoe; and every night I dreamed of it, and seemed to have one of those cedar-boxes, bound with green hide, lying on my heart. I told Mitchell of it, who cursed me for a lily-livered fool, and bade me calculate what eight boxes of gold, weighing two hundred and fifty pounds or so, would come to in London at fifty sovereigns the pound. A hundred thousand pounds is a great sum, it is true, but it cannot bring content, I reckon, nor even purchase a man sleep of nights. If I had had it and spent it, I could not have felt more regretful about that money, although, indeed, it was fair enough booty, since we were at open war with the Dons. We got safe out of the storm, but it was only to fall into Spanish hands, near St Thomas, where Captain Mitchell and seven of our men, who were recognised as notorious pirates, were hung. I saw their bones hanging there months afterwards, and heard them dancing in the wind in their iron fetters. There are no buccaneers or pirates in those parts now, I am told; and it is likely that I am the very last of that evil race. Jack Bryde and I were prisoners like the rest, and being taken to the mainland, were carried about the country with the troops for six months and more, always in company. At last we made our escape together in a small boat, and put to sea, when the brig *Fortune*, of St Johns, New Brunswick, picked us up, and brought us to that port in safety. There we got our living for a very long time how we could; I for my part happier than I had been for many a day, only Bryde was always harping upon the buried treasure by the Magdalena River, and urging me to go with him and dig it up. At last, more to please him than because I had any great desire for it myself, I agreed to take advantage with him of a vessel about to sail for Jamaica, from which island an opportunity would probably occur of our getting to Carthagena or Santa Martha. Jack Bryde was in great spirits that I had given my consent to this, although unwillingly; and upon the eve of the ship's sailing drank pretty hard, and came down to Reid's Point—where we were to embark—very light-headed. When I got there, I remembered that I had left my tobacco behind; and as there was still time enough, I went back for it, and was away about an hour. On my return, I met

some sailors carrying out something from the vessel, whose sails were just beginning to be spread. This was the dead body of my poor mate, Jack Bryde, who had fallen over the side of the vessel, and struck his head against the boat alongside. Then I feared that this was the judgment of God upon us still, and that I must needs be the one to suffer next. Instead, then, of going by that ship, I took passage in an Australian bark, and landed in the New World, there to live, I hoped, a new life and a better one to the end of my days. Until I saw you, I never wished to enrich any one with this secret, and far less to enrich myself. I have seen no less evil come of much money since I have been here, than when I was on the Spanish Main. You, however, are different from most men; you will know what to do with a sum like this: it will reinstate you, perhaps, in a regretted and lost position. I see that I read your hopes aright, lad. Well, did I not tell you that what seems but a weak helpless creature can sometimes do a strong man good service? It is almost always worth one's while to do a kindness; and you see what you have done for me already bear at least some promise.'

'A hundred thousand pounds!' muttered Robert Marsden; 'that is a fortune indeed!'

'Ay, my good lad, and all to be got by digging away a little sand under a certain tamarind-tree on the Magdalena River.'

'And how shall I find the tamarind-tree?' inquired the young man gravely.

'I have still some little strength, as I said, lad; and sooner than money which might do so much good should be lost for ever, I will even go with you myself,' answered Old Simon.

#### A PEEP AT THE MINING DISTRICTS.

We have in our mind's eye, as we write, a grimy hole in the side of a hill, dotted with stunted oak, hazel-bushes, and bramble. It is not a large hole—not by any means large enough to admit of a man entering it upright. Out of it oozes a dirty, red-brown fluid, which mingles with, and moistens and soaks the black smudge around and in front, and flows down over the adjoining turnpike, to the horror of the pedestrian, a stream of liquid coal-dust. Rank leaves grow in its neighbourhood, and the atmosphere is raw and unhealthy. The impartial sun himself seems to shun the place; and if ever, by any chance, he directs his radiant glance on it, it is but to withdraw it again in a moment in disgust. Altogether, one shrinks from it, and turns away from it; yet over these rank leaves, through that black puddle into that grimy hole, many men pass day by day—men who would have been tall, straight-limbed, shapely men, but who, from the necessity they are under of entering that hole, are bent, bandy-legged, misshapen beings. Children of ten and twelve years of age follow into that dark hole every morning; weird-looking, stunted creatures they are, already bowed down by their unsuitable labour, as men are bowed down by age.

That hole is the entrance to a West Riding of Yorkshire coal-pit, that extends horizontally into the hill; and if we stand by a short time, we shall see these children—little old men, they look—emerge black and soaking wet as the surroundings of the pit, each pushing before him a loaded wagon, not large, but too heavy for his child-strength, which he no sooner empties on one side, than he splashes back through the mud into that confined aperture, to enter which, even he has to bow his head. Poor child, he ought to have been at school; but here he must work

eight or ten hours per day in his wet dirty clothing, and feast off an indigestible 'pasty,' composed of unsweetened bramble-berries or sour apples, or off fat bacon and sodden bread, with a drink of muddy 'home-brewed' to swill it down. His grown-up companions dine off similar fare. What he now is, they were; what they are, he shall become. Now, he stoops to push his 'hurly' to the mouth of the pit, where he gets just a glimpse of the sky during his working-hours; in a short time, he shall grovel on his belly or his back, or crouch on his knees, to pick the mineral for other children to wheel away, without a solitary peep at the empyrean from the time he enters until he comes out—that is to say, if he be not killed by an explosion, or a falling of the roof, or other accident common to coal-mines, before he reaches the years of manhood. This is by no means improbable, as a few figures from a parliamentary return will demonstrate clearly enough. In Yorkshire alone, between March 1856 and November 1858, no less than 219 lives were sacrificed by casualties in coal-mines, and this number does not include fatal accidents in which only one life was lost in each case. We may, therefore, presume to add twenty more lives to the number of fatalities, which would give a total of 239 lives lost in one coal district of England, in a period of not more than two years and eight months.

According to the doctrine of compensation, the miner should have something in return for this hard, dirty, disagreeable work and danger. Has he really so? Let us see.

All that can be said of the miner's home is, that it is not quite so uncomfortable, unhealthy, dirty, and dangerous as the coal-pit. On the side of the valley opposite the coal-pit, of the entrance to which we have attempted to give an idea, stands a mining village. The road from the pits to it was first down the muddiest of lanes; then down a footpath through the fields, whose native clay, mingled with coal-slack, stuck to the feet like snow-balls; then over a dirty red-brown stream, by means of slimy, red-brown stones, up more clay field-paths laid with slack equally sticky; and, finally, up some slippery stone steps, worn and broken by the miners' long use of them as scrapers to take the more salient 'muck,' as they term it, from their shoes. Once at the top of the steps, you are in the centre of the village. Parallel to the stairs we have ascended, others descend to a public well; the landing-place, as it may be called, is therefore about as agreeable to the wearers of shiny boots as the path through the fields. To the right, in a sort of angle formed by the meeting of two roads, stands a beer-house, with dirty-green outside shutters thrown back to the wall, and a dirty-green door three-quarters open. The pipe-clayed sanded passage is soiled with the marks of colliers' dirty feet, and the beech-table, seen through the half-open window, is studded with the bottom marks of pint-pots. It isn't by any means a pleasant-looking retreat; but it is better than the collier's home, and this fact, together with his love of drink and company, makes him a pretty frequent visitor. To the left is the store where the miners obtain their necessities, generally on 'tick,' from pay-day to pay-day, their improvidence preventing most of them from ever being a week beforehand with their wants. At one side of the door, stands an open bag of flour and a box of candles; at the other, a calico-print and a cotton-handkerchief overhang a sack of potatoes and a half-keg of butter, set on an empty sugar-barrel. Conspicuous in one window is a parcel of split-peas, some uncleansed currants, and a few pairs of woollen stockings; in the other, a sample of coarse tea jostles some sandy-looking sugar, which, in its turn, infringes upon a roll of fat bacon. These

are the principal edifices in the village. The colliers' houses are small and low, with an air of squalor and a feeling of damp about them. The flags that pave the floors are in a dilapidated condition. The chairs are equally so, and are tossed down anywhere, without the slightest regard to order; and one of them bears unmistakable evidence that it was recently used as a baking-board. A lot of unwashed crockery stands on a greasy table, and a few cakes of sour 'snapping-rattle' hang over some strings stretched between the joists. A turn-up bed, painted to resemble maple, stands on one side of the room; opposite to it, a chest of mahogany-coloured drawers; and in a corner, a paintless, headless cradle, suspended above which is a wheezy German clock. As a general rule, there is no book or periodical to be seen. The houses are of course badly drained. Outside, in front, is an almost stagnant sewer, throwing off its malarial; and at the back there is a pigsty nuisance. No wonder that fevers now and again decimate these ignorant, hard-worked, improperly fed, badly housed people. This is no fancy picture; neither is it a description of things that once were, and now have no existence. It is a truthful portraiture of what exists to-day.

The poor collier children who are born in these unpromising places are unusually smart. A Wesleyan minister, unacquainted with the district, asked one of these urchins, who was returning from his labour in the mine, if he could tell him the way to a certain place, which we may call Oldmill. 'Ay,' he said, 'am bawm there mesen (I am going there myself).' The clergyman then entered into conversation with his guide, in the course of which he asked him what he did for a livelihood. The boy told him; and in return inquired what he did for a living. 'Oh, my little lad,' replied the minister, 'I shew people the way to heaven.' 'Well, aw never heerd o' sich a thing,' said the boy in astonishment; 'heaw can yo' shew fowk that far roud, and thee doesn't knaw the way to Oldmill?'

The last annual report of Mr Tremenheere, the commissioner appointed, under parliamentary sanction, to inquire into the condition of the mining population, shews, however, that education and cleanliness are slowly creeping into some mining districts. Educational prize-schemes have been established in many places, with a view to stimulate miners to send their children to school, and the children to learn when they are there; but these are not taken advantage of to such an extent as is desirable, and might have been expected. The great bulk of the children are removed from school before they have been sufficiently grounded in elementary knowledge. Mr Tremenheere is of opinion, and in this he is supported by persons of influence in the colliery districts, that nothing but a legislative enactment will insure a fair measure of education for the children of miners; though educational means have been afforded to, and in some degree made use of by, men at present employed in the capacity of foremen. There can be no doubt that, with properly educated and qualified overseers, viewers, &c., the casualties in coal-mines would speedily decrease.

It may be an incentive to collier-boys to mention, that there is an excellent prospect for those who distinguish themselves at school. Educated men are much in demand at all collieries. One of the gentlemen connected with the very extensive works of the Messrs Baird of Gartsherrie (who have shewn great anxiety to improve the condition of their workmen) said to Mr Tremenheere: 'We have always acted on the principle of drawing from our schools when we want to fill up vacancies of trust connected with our works. Of such we have about 50, the salaries attached to which are from £.70 to £.150 a year, and some higher; and there are frequent changes, many being drafted off to other works, on promotion, as it were. The other day we wanted one, on a vacancy

occurring, but no youth was found sufficiently qualified, although mathematical and other useful instruction is offered at our schools, and several boys are in the classes where these branches are taught. They, however, frequently leave school before they have sufficiently qualified themselves, although their parents could well afford to keep them there longer. We have a direct inducement to look out for well-qualified lads for those situations of trust, and *merit and ability cannot escape us.*' The manager of the numerous large pits of Messrs Merry and Cunningham says: 'In Ayrshire alone we have forty pits. We want one underground foreman, who must be a man of superior knowledge, and an overman on an average for each pit; in some pits we have two. We have great difficulty in getting such men; we have to pick them out among the common colliers. There is no class of men worse to get than a good underground man, or overman.' Mr Galloway of the Barleith and Dollar collieries says, that out of fifty applications for an underground foreman, of which he was recently in want, only three were worthy of a moment's consideration.

And yet, in face of such facts, the majority of parents are selfish enough to sacrifice their children's future prospects rather than forego the trifling produce of their ten-year-old labour. The present looms so largely in the eyes of these people, that it entirely hides the future; and their children grow up to be nothing more than common miners, when, with two years' more schooling, and a little after-application, they might have risen to be managers with an excellent salary, and much lighter labour.

Girls' schools have also been established in some of the mining districts. In addition to the usual elementary instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, &c., special prizes are given by the committee of the Birmingham Association, 'for sewing a shirt-sleeve, 7 inches long, 8 inches wide, with a gusset 3 inches square, and a piece for the wristband, 5 inches wide and 3 inches deep; the material to be white calico of 6d. a yard, well scalloped. For running with darn-ing-cotton the heel of a woman's stocking at the price of 8d. a pair. For knitting the heel of a worsted sock. For darn ing linen; for patching linen. For the best examination in Tegetmeier's *Manual of Domestic Economy.*' At Gartsherrie, a school has been established during the present year 'to train young females in the art of housekeeping, at least so far as this consists in the proper selection and careful cooking of food, in the washing, dressing, and mending of clothes, and thorough cleanliness.' We augur much good from these efforts to instruct those who are to be the future wives and mothers of colliers. Many a man is now driven to the public-house by the untidiness and general incapacity of his wife. By her want of management, his earnings are needlessly and foolishly squandered. Discomfort, debt, and the over-work of children are the consequences; whereas, had she been intelligently thrifty, they might have lived in comfort, put aside occasionally a little money for a 'rainy day,' and have been under no necessity of withdrawing their children so early from school.

In connection with the training institution for girls at Gartsherrie, is a boarding-house for unmarried men. It is under the charge of a matron; and Mr Tremenheere describes it as scrupulously clean and comfortable in all parts, the bedrooms and bedding especially presenting a striking contrast to those of ordinary lodging-houses. There is a washing and bath room, in which a warm bath can be had at any time; and there are conveniences for drying wet clothes. 'The charge for all this is 3d. per night, or 18d. per week. Nevertheless, it is almost sufficient to make the establishment self-supporting. For food and washing, as well as lodging, the highest charge is 10s. a week, for which the meals are: breakfast—coffee, bread and butter, ham and eggs; dinner—broth,

beef or mutton, and potatoes and bread ; supper—tea, bread and butter, and cheese. The lowest at present is 8s. 6d., the difference in the diet being porridge and milk for breakfast and supper ; and if any lodger prefers a less expensive dinner, he can have it.' Arrangement is also made for supplying dinners to any of the work-people, not inmates, who may desire them.

Many improvements, we are glad to learn from this report, are being made in the house-accommodation for miners in certain districts, particularly in Scotland. Attention is being paid to drainage ; the houses are being built more commodiously, and on plans that take decency into account ; and it is satisfactory to know that 'experience has shewn that by a judicious outlay, excellent accommodation can be provided for labouring-men and their families at a rate which affords a satisfactory return upon the capital.' The fever, which proves so fatal in many mining villages, being, as Dr Simon expresses it, 'essentially a disease of filth,' we may expect, as a result of these better houses, a decrease in the rate of mortality.

At Gartsherrie and Eglington, the houses of the employés of the Messrs Baird have gardens attached, which the colliers now take a pride in keeping neat, though, when the gardens were at first introduced, some of them were allowed to lie neglected. 'The gardens,' says Mr Tremenheere, 'attached to the rows of colliers' houses of the Barleith and Dollar collieries (Mr John Galloway's), the Annandale (Mr Finnie's), and the Caprington (Mr Cunningham Smith's), in Ayrshire, can scarcely be exceeded in neatness and the mode of cultivation. At the former, a narrow bed on each side the door afforded room for roses, carnations, &c., to ornament the front of each cottage. The roadway was underdrained, and kept quite clean. Each garden, corresponding in width to the front of the cottage, was enclosed, and each had its small grass-plot. At the bottom of the garden, and consequently well removed from the house, was the ash-pit, and every proper convenience. Premiums of £1, 10s., and 5s., are offered for the best kept cottages and gardens ; and a card, with an ornamental design printed in colours, is given with each, and is much valued by those who gain it. It is framed, and hung up in their cottages. At Annandale, also, there were flowers in profusion all along the front of each house. The plots in front of the houses at Caprington were laid out with as much taste as could be seen in any gentleman's grounds ; they are neatly bordered with box, and the paths made of a light-coloured material from some adjoining lime-works. The flowers were very various in kind, and in great perfection. 'The emulation among themselves rendered an offer of prizes unnecessary. The refining influence of a taste of this kind, and the counteraction it affords against debasing enjoyments, are obviously as much within the reach of the colliery population as of any other, wherever duly encouraged by their masters.'

There is evidently a desire on the part of the masters generally to treat their men in a much more rational way than was customary a few years ago, and on the side of the men there is a growing disposition to regard the masters less as tyrants than they formerly did. They are both beginning to see that their interests are identical, not antagonistic ; that what is ill for the master, is not good for the man ; and *vice versa*. There are still, however, causes of dissension on both sides. The men have still to complain of the 'truck' and 'butty' systems, and the masters of combinations and strikes. To get rid of these grievances, the men must distrust those stump-orators whose gain is their misery, and masters must not rely so much on the reports of their agents. As far as possible, all grievances on either side should be stated personally, for the more frequent the personal intercourse, the less likelihood of misunderstanding.

#### THE END OF IT ALL

The night is over—open wide the shutter ;  
The night is over, and the dismal rain ;  
Only the wild winds sob, and wail, and mutter  
Like mighty spirits tired out with pain.  
The storm is over ; I lie still and wait  
For an old friend I have not seen of late.

The dreary, dreary years since our last meeting—  
The long, dark shadows of remembered things,  
Thank God, those phantoms of the past are fleeting  
Before the sweep of the Death-angel's wings ;  
So I can lie in peace, with failing breath,  
And calmly wait till you approach—or Death !

'Twas very dreary when, of all forsaken,  
You left me trembling in the cold alone ;  
But Death was kinder far, and he has taken  
The hand you dropped so coldly from your own,  
And leads me—closing my world-wearied eyes—  
To his still shore, which hath no memories.

What will it matter, when we meet in heaven ?  
We shall not hear Life's angry billows roar ;  
This little bark, too rudely tempest-driven,  
Casts anchor sooner where the storms are o'er.  
E'en now, those waves have left on Memory's shore  
Meek thoughts, like pearl-shells scattered, nothing  
more.

And, oh, forgive her, as I have forgiven,  
Who came between us with her cruel art !  
It will not matter, when we meet in heaven,  
That our brief lives on earth were spent apart.  
And then to love—and know that love is vain—  
What wonder she was mad with rage and pain !

Methinks I should know something of that sorrow,  
Burning like fire on the heart and brain.  
I, too, with trembling hand, have sought to borrow  
Mirth's blushing roses for a brow of pain,  
Though all these dreary years the world's cold eye  
Has never read my secret—but I die.

But, ah ! my dear old friend, 'tis almost over,  
The long, long struggle between pride and pain,  
And neither slandering foe nor doubting lover  
Has power to grieve me any more again :  
For God's great angel having touched mine eyes,  
I read the meaning of those tears and sighs.

We shall not meet ; my latest hours are flying ;  
Ere sets yon sun upon the darkened land,  
Yet will I clasp one flower close in dying,  
That you may take it from my cold, still hand,  
And keep it as a sign of wrong forgiven,  
And a mute pledge that we shall meet in heaven.

Nay, not of wrong forgiven, but as a token  
From a true heart that loved you to the last,  
Whose faith, though sorely tried, was never broken ;  
So you may, turning from that dreary past,  
Look onward, with a firm untroubled brow,  
To the fair land where I am hastening now.

M. L. P.